

EXPLORING THE USE OF ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSE (AU) ON X FOR ENGLISH VOCABULARY MASTERY

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi penggunaan Alternative Universe (AU) pada platform X (Twitter) dalam mendukung penguasaan kosakata bahasa Inggris. Metode yang digunakan adalah narrative thematic literature review dengan menganalisis dan mensintesis temuan dari berbagai penelitian terdahulu yang relevan. Artikel jurnal yang membahas manfaat dan tantangan penggunaan AU dalam pembelajaran kosakata bahasa Inggris dijadikan sebagai sumber data utama. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa AU pada X menyediakan konteks pembelajaran yang menarik dan autentik melalui narasi berbasis cerita, dialog, serta penggunaan bahasa percakapan, slang, dan ekspresi idiomatik. Paparan kosakata secara berulang dalam konteks cerita mendorong pembelajaran kosakata secara insidental dan meningkatkan keterlibatan pembelajar. Namun, kajian ini juga menemukan beberapa keterbatasan, seperti penggunaan bahasa yang tidak baku, kurangnya struktur pembelajaran, serta potensi ketidaksesuaian dengan tujuan akademik. Oleh karena itu, AU pada X lebih efektif digunakan sebagai media pendukung pembelajaran kosakata dibandingkan sebagai sumber pembelajaran utama. Temuan ini diharapkan dapat menjadi referensi bagi pendidik dalam memanfaatkan media digital secara bijak dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci: Alternative Universe, X (Twitter), penguasaan kosakata, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, media digital

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the use of Alternative Universe (AU) content on X (Twitter) in supporting English vocabulary mastery. The research employed a narrative thematic literature review by analyzing and synthesizing findings from relevant previous studies. Journal articles discussing the benefits and challenges of using AU for English vocabulary learning were used as the primary data sources. The findings indicate that AU on X offers an engaging and contextual learning environment through story-based narratives, dialogues, and the use of conversational language, slang, and idiomatic expressions. Repeated exposure to vocabulary within meaningful contexts encourages incidental vocabulary learning and increases learner engagement. However, several limitations were also identified, including informal language use, lack of instructional structure, and potential misalignment with formal academic objectives. These challenges suggest that AU may not always provide accurate language models for EFL learners. Therefore, AU on X is more effective when utilized as a supplementary learning resource rather than a primary instructional tool. This study provides insights for educators to consider the pedagogical potential and limitations of digital narrative media in English vocabulary learning.

Keyword: Alternative Universe, X (Twitter), vocabulary mastery, English learning, digital media

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary plays a fundamental role in English language learning because it serves as the primary source for understanding and expressing meaning in the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Kılıç, 2019). A sufficient knowledge of vocabulary enables learners to understand texts, interpret spoken language, and communicate ideas effectively, while a limited vocabulary limits overall language performance (Robiya et al., 2024). Vocabulary mastery involves not only recognizing words, but also understanding their meaning, context, pronunciation, and proper usage (Zuhairi & Mistar, 2023). Despite its importance, many students still struggle with English vocabulary, particularly in remembering new words, understanding vocabulary in context, and using words accurately in communication (Permatasari et al., 2025). These difficulties are often worsened by low learning motivation and limited exposure to English outside the classroom, which reduces opportunities to practice and strengthen vocabulary in a meaningful way (Arochman et al., 2023; Robiya et al., 2024).

Despite its crucial role, literature consistently shows that learners have not achieved a sufficient vocabulary mastery (Ndraha et al., 2023). Students often have difficulty remembering new words, understanding vocabulary in context, and using vocabulary appropriately in oral and written communication (TEKIR, 2021). These repeated problems indicate that vocabulary learning remains fragile when it relies heavily on memorization and limited context exposure (Machfudi & Afidah, 2022).

In addition, vocabulary difficulties are worsened by learning conditions that do not sufficiently support vocabulary development. Low learning motivation and limited exposure to English outside the classroom reduce opportunities for repeated and meaningful vocabulary use, which is essential for long-term retention and mastery. Integrating these findings, the literature suggests that vocabulary challenges arise from the interaction between limited vocabulary knowledge and a learning environment that lacks contextual, engaging, and sustained exposure to the language (Arochman et al., 2023)

Due to the problems above, digital media has been identified as a potential solution for addressing vocabulary learning challenges. One of the digital media platforms that is familiar in English education is Twitter, that has been changed into X. This media presents some contents for education, consisting of educational accounts, thread-based learning, and Alternative Universe (AU).

This literature review focused on the use of AU in supporting English vocabulary mastery. Many previous studies have investigated AU as an engaging tool for education especially for vocabulary mastery because AU provide exposure to conversational English, slang, and idiomatic expressions in meaningful story-based contexts (Anggraini et al., 2023; Azmi & Al-Ghadir, 2024) AU allows learners to encounter vocabulary naturally through digital narratives, increasing engagement and contextual understanding (Aprilia & Krismayani, 2025). Synthesizing the literature, AU on X can be viewed as a contextual and motivating environment that supports vocabulary mastery by offering authentic language exposure and repeated encounters with vocabulary in narrative form (Anggraini et al., 2023; Yuniasih et al., 2025).

However, From an educational perspective, the limitations of AUs might have a negative impact on language learning quality. Incomplete storylines, confusing narrative development, and unrealistic depictions may hinder text comprehension and lower the value of AUs as tools for exercising academic reading skills such as inference, plot analysis, and critical reasoning. The presence of sensitive topic and ungrammatical phrases also presents lacking language models for EFL learners, which may contradict with classroom objectives like as proper grammar and appropriate vocabulary use. Furthermore, unpredictable update schedules and the risk of excessive screen time could take students' attention away from more scheduled academic duties including reading curriculum-based literature, completing writing assignments, and studying for exams (Yuniasih et al., 2025). This narrative thematic literature review aims to discuss key concepts and findings related to benefits and difficulties in using Alternative Universe (AU) on X (Twitter) in supporting English vocabulary mastery.

METHOD

This current research applied a narrative thematic literature review by summarizing and synthesizing data from previous studies and grouping them into ideas or themes related to benefits and difficulties in using AU on X in supporting English vocabulary mastery. This is supported by Green et al. (2006) and Snyder (2019), explaining that a narrative thematic literature review, as opposed to an author-by-author discussion, summarizes and synthesizes prior research by classifying it into themes or topics to find trends, differences, and research gaps in previous studies (Baier, 2017).

The data sources were publications from scientific journals that discussed the benefits and challenges in using AU on X in supporting English vocabulary mastery. The researchers critically examined each study's objectives, methodologies, and findings to gain a comprehensive understanding. This study is a literature review, which means the population and sample are not directly involved. Instead, journal articles served as the primary data source, which was then synthesized and addressed in the next section.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher discuss many findings from past study in order to show the benefits and challenges of using AU on X to enhance English vocabulary mastery.

The reviewed studies consistently indicate that Alternative Universe (AU) stories on X serve as a contextual and engaging digital for learning English vocabulary (Sirait & Hanim, 2022). AU stories encourage incidental vocabulary mastery rather than rote memorization by exposing students to real-world language use through conversational expressions, slang, idiomatic phrases, and context-rich narratives (Rohmani et al., 2023).

Learners can experience words in relevant contexts and have a stronger comprehension and recall of the terms through repeated exposure to vocabulary incorporated in stories. The motivational value of AU narratives is also highlighted by a number of research. Anggraini et al. (2023) report that in casual digital settings like AU on X, students show greater engagement and willingness to read English literature. In the same way, Aprilia and Krismayani

(2025) point out that emotionally charged narratives and a variety of narrative styles promote voluntary and repeated reading, both of which are critical for vocabulary growth. While the focus of these research varies, with some emphasizing exposure and others engagement, they all point to the fact that AU offers a supportive atmosphere that encourages long-term engagement with English language.

The literature highlights particular benefits of AU narratives for vocabulary development that go beyond engagement. Through dialogue, character development, and developing storylines, AU enables students to learn vocabulary through narrative-based interaction. Contextual guessing, semantic association, and pragmatic comprehension of word use are all supported by this type of learning (Anggraini et al., 2023; Yuniasih et al., 2025). However, there are variations in the ways that research measures vocabulary outcomes. Yuniasih et al. (2025) test vocabulary mastery more explicitly and indicate both positive improvements and learning obstacles, whereas Aprilia and Krismayani (2025) concentrate on word exposure without directly assessing mastery. Despite these methodological variations, the studies generally agree that, especially when students are actively involved with the material, AU narratives provide meaningful vocabulary encounters that can aid in vocabulary growth.

The research points out a number of challenges to using AU on X for English vocabulary learning, despite its possible advantages. The informal and unstructured character of AU material is one of the main issues. Yuniasih et al. (2025) report that senior high school pupils in particular struggle with vocabulary retention, pronunciation, grammatical precision, and memory. Similarly, Aprilia and Krismayani (2025) point out that systematic vocabulary monitoring and reinforcement may be limited in unstructured digital contexts. The educational effectiveness of AU as a learning resource may be limited by additional difficulties including as exposure to grammatically incorrect language, delicate subjects, and variable narrative quality. These problems imply that AU does not always offer reliable language models that are in line with official learning objectives. Researchers agree that these difficulties are caused by a lack of

instructional organization and pedagogical support rather than the narrative format itself (Anggraini et al., 2023; Yuniasih et al., 2025). As a result, AU works best when used as an additional learning resource rather than as a stand-alone vocabulary teaching tool.

The literature, which synthesizes the results across themes, indicates that Alternative Universe (AU) narratives on X provide an engaging and contextual setting that facilitates incidental vocabulary learning through repeated exposure and story engagement. However, student engagement and the availability of pedagogical support are directly related to how well AU fosters vocabulary mastery. The casual and unpredictable nature of AU may restrict its educational potential in the absence of guidance. As a result, although while AU has great promise as a substitute method for acquiring vocabulary, integrating it into English instruction necessitates carefully taking learner needs and instructional goals into account.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this narrative thematic literature review, readers, particularly English learners and prospective educators, are asked to consider Alternative Universe (AU) on X as a helpful and entertaining further tool for vocabulary mastery. Readers may benefit by engaging with AU narratives to gain more exposure to actual English, including slang, common expressions, and contextual language use. To maximize vocabulary development, readers should actively identify unusual terms, gather meanings from context, and review AU content on a regular schedule to improve vocabulary mastery.

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